

CEOMessage

From the desk of Susan Brown



June 21, 2022

Today, National Indigenous Peoples Day, is a day for all individuals to recognize and celebrate the diverse cultures and outstanding contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples across the lands now known as Canada. The Canadian Constitution recognizes these three groups as Aboriginal – or Indigenous – Peoples.

Although these groups share many similarities, they each have their own distinct languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. For generations, many Aboriginal Peoples and communities have celebrated their culture on or near this day due to the significance of the summer solstice as the longest day of the year.

Today we take time to celebrate the Aboriginal Peoples we serve and our collaboration with the seven Interior Region First Nations (Dǎ́kelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, Northern St'át'imc, Syilx, T̓silhqot'in), Métis Nation BC, and Aboriginal health service organizations. Through our partnerships, we continue to work to create positive change and improve the health outcomes of communities.

This month, Interior Health will release the revitalized Aboriginal Health and Wellness Strategy (AHWS) for 2022-2026 that sets our direction and vision, determined and pursued with Aboriginal partners. In it we prioritize addressing the recommendations outlined in the In Plain Sight Report to address Aboriginal-specific racism found in the B.C. health-care system. I would like to thank everyone involved in this work to improve accountability and demonstrate progress towards these recommendations.

We take ownership of the systematic change and reconciliation required within the health system to eradicate anti-Aboriginal racism, advance cultural safety, and improve the health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples living in the Interior Region through equity-based health service delivery.

I encourage everyone to join me today in reaffirming our commitment to anti-racism and cultural safety across Interior Health. Take time during your day to participate in local events lead by Aboriginal partners and educate yourself on the history and diversity of Aboriginal Peoples on whose territory you reside.

Susan Brown
President & CEO